1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

828 that she can have him for herself, but will be frightened away if
787 the man makes a clean breast of the visionary intrigue. Snake-women spirits most commonly appear to men in dreams. If a man continues to dream in this way, the spirit woman will appear to him in the bush and will try to kill him. Prolonged dreaming of this sort can only be cured by a piaiyen. The Caribs, in common
[839] with most men, find that erotic dreams accompanying seminal emission practically disappear if a man is having regular intercourse with a woman, and explain this phenomenon on the theory that spirit women are too intelligent to attempt to seduce a man who is well satisfied with his earthly sexual life.

The case is related of a certain man who continued to dream in this way without saying anything about it. Finally the spirit with which he was consorting in his dreams became pregnant and gave birth to a child. Other people heard the baby crying in the bush. Going into the forest they were surprised to see the spirit woman appear to them holding a baby in her arms. The man said nothing, but became violently ill and only when he was dying did he tell the story of his experience and express the belief that the spirit was carrying him away.

These dream women seem to be connected with snakes and with
[825] only a particular kind of snake, called timering akoyu, which, marked with red, white, blue, and green coloring, is considered very beautiful.

The figures of one's enemies are wont to appear in nightmares. Even if the enemies are not recognizable, the grotesque and hideous forms seen in nightmares are regarded as disguises of the spirits of persons who are plotting harm to the dreamer. A man who is bothered by repeated nightmares consults a sorcerer to discover what is afoot and thus nip any plots in the bud.

• 196 **Sex in Inanimate Objects.** Certain objects of material culture are thought of as having sex, according to their form. It cannot be said on the basis of my information that the conception embraces more than a rudimentary idea of animistic identification, nor does it seem that the sex of a given object is connected with the spirit of that object. On the whole, the sexual differentiation of certain objects seems to refer to purely qualitative differences. The form which is considered best is in each case identified with the male sex.

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1. Houses: steep roofed houses are male. Flatter roofed houses, in which the angle of the roof is more oblique, are female. The flat roofed type does not shed the rain so well and requires more thatch than the steeper roofed variety; consequently it is not so efficient. 196

2. Benches: the simple type is regarded as female. This type only is found in use on the Barama at present. A more highly elaborated variety is said to have been in use formerly and is regarded as male.

3. Korials: a V-shaped cross sectioned korial is female; a korial U-shaped in cross section is male. The male type is steadier, carries a bigger load, is easier to manage, and is said to travel faster.

MYTHS AND TALES

1. The Origin of Foods

A long time ago the Caribs were living without knowledge of cultivated plants. With them lived the bush cow, the rat, and the squirrel. The bush cow would every day go across the river and mysteriously disappear in the bush. One day the rat asked to accompany him which, after some hesitation, the bush cow decided to permit. He told the rat to catch hold behind his ears and to hang on in this fashion. He told the rat to bite his ears if anyone should shoot at them as they were swimming across the river. The rat lost his hold two times, necessitating his biting the cow's ear. Each time he did so the cow ducked under water, much to the rat's annoyance. (Laughter from audience.) Perhaps it was for this reason that the rat retained mental reservations when the bush cow, arrived at the other side of the river, made the rat promise not to tell about anything he saw during their adventure. They then proceeded into the bush some distance to a wonderful tree, on the branches of which hung all manner of fine fruits and vegetables, bananas, papaia, yams, tanyas, cassava. The rat ate his fill of corn, while the cow was making his meal, but retained one grain of corn in the corner of his mouth when they left. Arrived back at the village, the rat after some time could no longer keep his secret and told the people what he had seen. "Ah ha!" the people said, and the whole settlement went 539 773